

heard from cities in Minnesota. It is all over the country.

It is important to stress that this amendment does not entitle any airport, local government or other eligible entity to receive a noise mitigation grant. Nor does it have any financial impact. This amendment does not even affect an applicant's eligibility to be considered for an airport noise reduction grant. Each applicant must demonstrate that its proposed project deserves to be funded, but no applicant can be disqualified from consideration merely because the area covered by the grant request does not have a dB(A) DNL greater than 65.

Mr. Chairman, communities coexisting with major airports is one of the great challenges of modern life. My amendment is intended to help us rise to that challenge.

I urge all members to support my amendment.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I too am concerned about the environmental impact of aviation. Noise is a very serious issue and impossible to solve to the satisfaction of all. Although new technologies and planes and air space redesign will assist in the noise problem with the number of passengers projected in the near future, noise will continue to be a problem.

I commend the gentlewoman for bringing this issue to our attention, as she has time after time. As I say, it will continue to be a problem. I am willing to accept the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Chairman, I am willing to accept the amendment as well.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the Clerk will report the amendment.

There was no objection.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

At the end of the bill (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used in violation of section 8 of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, with respect to workers on federally-funded transportation projects.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the two subcommittee Chairs. Might I

just for a moment thank them for a bill that is enormously challenging, transportation and housing.

I want to thank the staff for their very hard work and the commitment that this particular bill has in place as it relates to the Treasury and other agencies. Let me acknowledge the importance of hard work as well.

Mr. Chairman, we can't do without the workers that provide the engine of our economy. If we are to appreciate workers, I think it is extremely important that we do not have outside forces that would, in fact, take away from the dignity and the responsibility to the American worker; and that's what my amendment is about.

It is a very simple amendment. It is sometimes fashionable to speak ill about working Americans who are in unions. This amendment simply provides support for union workers on federally funded projects, simple without any additions to it. It is to reinforce the importance of that work and to reinforce the importance of those workers.

I believe that the engine of America is fused by American workers, and many of them are both union and non-union workers. I stand today to affirm all workers. My amendment simply asks that those Federal funds that are utilized, nothing is done in the federally funded project to undermine America's workers.

I believe that we have had a long history of the American labor movement. It was started by a group of dreamers who simply believed that we should have the best working atmosphere for America's workers. Employees represented by free and democratic unions of their own choosing participate actively in determining their wages, hours and working conditions.

Their living standards are the highest in the world. Their job rights are protected by collective bargaining. They have fringe benefits that were unheard of less than a generation ago.

I know that the support of these workers is bipartisan. I ask my colleagues to join me in a very simple amendment that ensures that these projects that are federally funded comply with the law, simply comply with the law, and do not undermine the working people of America.

I ask my colleagues to support working people, working people of America, as we issue Federal funds so that they can be protected.

My amendment is simple but makes an important contribution to the legislation. My amendment simply provides that none of the funds made available in this appropriations bill shall be used in a manner inconsistent with the National Labor Relations Act.

Mr. Chairman, I know it is fashionable today to disparage, downplay, or minimize the importance of organized labor to our country. That is easy to do but it would be wrong. In the post 9-11 age, where our transportation systems and infrastructure have been demonstrated to be targets of those who would do us harm, it is more important than ever that

those who work in the transportation sectors are the best, most able, most professional, most experienced, and committed workers this nation has to offer. To do otherwise would put the security of our nation at risk.

Mr. Chairman, those who would destroy or further limit the rights of organized labor—those who would cripple collective bargaining or prevent organization of the unorganized—do a disservice to the cause of democracy.

Fifty years or so ago the American Labor Movement was little more than a group of dreamers, and look at it now. From coast to coast, in factories, stores, warehouse and business establishments of all kinds, industrial democracy is at work.

Employees, represented by free and democratic trade unions of their own choosing, participate actively in determining their wages, hours and working conditions. Their living standards are the highest in the world. Their job rights are protected by collective bargaining agreements. They have fringe benefits that were unheard of less than a generation ago.

Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor. But their work goes beyond their own jobs, and even beyond our borders.

Our unions have fought for aid to education, for better housing, for development of our national resources, and for saving the family-sized farms. They have spoken, not for narrow self-interest, but for the public interest and for the people.

Mr. Chairman, unions are as important as they ever were—because corporations are just as dedicated to their bottom line, regardless of the consequences for workers. The nature of work in America is changing. Employers are trying to shed responsibilities—for providing health insurance, good pension coverage, reasonable work hours and job safety protections, for example—while making workers' jobs and incomes less secure through downsizing, part-timing and contracting out. Working people need a voice at work to keep employers from making our jobs look like they did 100 years ago, with sweatshop conditions, unlivable wages and 70-hour workweeks.

In my hometown of Houston, I know firsthand the commitment, dedication, and professionalism of organized transit workers employed by the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO). These workers are making the transportation system of Houston one of the best in the nation. Accordingly, I want to take this opportunity to extol their accomplishments and to express my commitment to the protection of their hard won right to engage in and enjoy the benefits of collective bargaining. I think most of my colleagues can agree that these hard won rights should not be taken away or undermined, and my amendment reaffirms this proposition.

And lest we forget, Mr. Chairman, it was the men and women of organized labor who rushed into the burning World Trade Center Towers when others were rushing out. The men and women of organized labor put their lives on the line for their fellow Americans every day. They do not ask for much. All they ask is to be treated with respect and dignity. They want what we all want: to do their jobs and to make a better life for their families.